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COMMISSIONERS

MIKE GLEASON - Chairman WILLIAM A. MUNDELL JEFF HATCH-MILLER KRISTIN K. MAYES GARY PIERCE

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AZ CORP COMMISSION DOCKET COMTROL

BEFORE THE ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION Anzona Corporation Commission RECEIVED AND ACKETED

DEC 20 2007

DOCKETED BY

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF SEMPRA ENERGY SOLUTIONS LLC FOR A CERTIFICATE OF CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY FOR COMPETITIVE RETAIL ELECTRIC SERVICE.

DOCKET NO. E-03964A-06-0168

PROCEDURAL ORDER

#### BY THE COMMISSION:

On March 16, 2006, Sempra Energy Solutions LLC ("Sempra," "SES," or "Company") filed with the Arizona Corporation Commission ("Commission") an application for a Certificate of Convenience and Necessity ("CC&N") to provide competitive retail electric service.

Intervention was granted to Tucson Electric Power Company ("TEP") on April 12, 2006; to Arizona Public Service Company ("APS") on April 26, 2006; to Air Liquide Industrial U.S. LP ("Air Liquide") on June 15, 2006; to the Residential Utility Consumer Office ("RUCO") on April 13, 2007; to the Salt River Project Agricultural and Improvement Project ("SRP") on May 11, 2007; to New West Energy ("New West" or "NWEC") on July 31, 2007; and to the Arizona Investment Council ("AIC") on August 15, 2007.

A hearing is set to commence on the application on February 19, 2008. Prefiled testimony has been filed, with further filings due on January 17, 2008, and February 7, 2008. The deadline for discovery is February 11, 2008, and the pre-hearing conference is set for February 11, 2008.

On December 3, 2007, Sempra filed a Motion to Strike Testimony ("Motion").

On December 7, 2007, New West, Air Liquide, RUCO, and the Commission's Utilities Division Staff ("Staff") filed Responses to the Motion.

On December 13, 2007, RUCO filed a Reply to Air Liquide's Response to the Motion.

On August 29, 2007, SRP filed a Notice of Withdrawal of Intervention. By Procedural Order issued September 28, 2007, SRP was granted leave to withdraw its intervention.

#### **SEMPRA'S MOTION TO STRIKE**

Sempra moves to strike, in its entirety, the prefiled direct testimony of Stephen Ahearn filed by RUCO on July 3, 2007; the prefiled direct testimony of Frank G. Graves filed by New West on August 31, 2007; and the prefiled direct testimony of Peter Fox-Penner filed by New West on August 31, 2007. Sempra requests that its Motion be resolved as soon as practicable, so that the parties know how to proceed in preparing responsive testimony.

Sempra states that it filed its application for a CC&N in conformance with A.R.S. § 40-208.<sup>2</sup> Sempra acknowledges that A.R.S. § 40-207<sup>3</sup> requires electricity suppliers to obtain a CC&N from the Commission before offering electricity for sale to retail customers, and states that Sempra has specifically sought such authority under A.R.S. §§ 40-201 through 40-203, 40-207, and 40-281 *et seq.* and A.A.C. R14-2-202. Sempra asserts that the testimony that it moves to strike expands the issues in this proceeding beyond those necessary for the Commission to address in its Decision on Sempra's application and is "so broad and general in nature, as well as in conflict with existing Arizona law, that its admission conceivably could deprive SES, and perhaps other affected parties, of due process of law." (Motion at 3.) Sempra claims that "Arizona law already provides for retail direct access, and thus, the penumbra of issues raised in the NWEC/RUCO testimony are clearly beyond the scope of SES' application, are irrelevant and should not be made part of the record in this proceeding." (Motion at 2.) Sempra contends that there are "three core issues" to be resolved in this proceeding, as follows: (1) whether Sempra satisfies the relevant statutory and regulatory criteria

<sup>2</sup> A.R.S. § 40-208 provides as follows:

After December 31, 2000 service territories established by a certificate of convenience and necessity shall be open to electric generation service competition for all retail electric customers for any electricity supplier that obtains a certificate from the commission pursuant to § 40-207 or any public power entity.

<sup>3</sup> A.R.S. § 40-207 provides as follows:

A. An electricity supplier shall obtain a certificate from the commission before offering electricity for sale to retail electric customers in this state.

B. The commission may adopt, amend and repeal rules reasonably necessary to carry out this section. On or before December 31, 1998, the commission shall adopt rules providing minimum standards of disclosure and complaint procedures applicable to certificated electricity suppliers. The commission may impose conditions on the certification of electricity suppliers to assure their financial stability, including periodic reports, bonds and deposits.

C. As a condition of obtaining a certificate required under subsection A, an electricity supplier shall agree to be subject to the transaction privilege taxes and affiliated excise taxes pursuant to title 42, chapter 5 and the provisions of the model city tax code.

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necessary to be granted a CC&N; (2) the terms and conditions under which a CC&N should be granted to Sempra, if one is granted; and (3) whether the Commission has before it the information necessary under the requirements of *Phelps Dodge Corp. v. Ariz. Elec. Power Group*, 207 Ariz. 95, 83 P.3d 573 (App. 2004) ("*Phelps Dodge*"). (Motion at 1.)

Sempra is of the opinion that the New West and RUCO prefiled testimony "would divert the issues in this proceeding to address (i) whether retail direct access is good for Arizona as a matter of public policy, (ii) the broad design of a retail choice program, including the design of default Standard Offer Service, (iii) customer price risk, (iv) recovery of stranded generation costs by incumbent utilities, (v) expanded regulatory oversight, and (vi) a survey of experiences to date with direct access in the United States." (Motion at 3.) Sempra argues that the provision of Standard Offer Service and recovery of stranded generation costs have already been provided for in prior Commission decisions; that the Arizona legislature has opened Arizona to retail choice; that the Commission has already had experience in evaluating the qualifications of energy service providers ("ESPs") such as Sempra; and that there is neither a requirement nor a need to revisit those issues in order to grant Sempra a CC&N. (Motion at 3-4.)

Sempra asserts that New West and RUCO will not be prejudiced by the granting of Sempra's Motion because they will have an opportunity to file "appropriate rebuttal testimony" in accord with the current procedural schedule in this matter.

# Sempra's Argument Regarding New West Witness Graves' Direct Testimony

Sempra objects to the Graves testimony's reference to "Arizona's readiness to reinstitute retail electric competition," arguing that the testimony assumes "that direct access has been canceled in Arizona." (Motion at 4.) Sempra also objects to the Graves testimony regarding New West's position that the Commission should address five issues prior to ruling on Sempra's application. Sempra's Motion briefly addresses each of the five issues and argues that the Graves testimony does not appear to consider to the fact that the Commission conducted a rulemaking on retail electric competition, and does not refer to any changed circumstances or other condition that might necessitate the Commission's revisiting the issues or modifying the rules relating to retail choice. Sempra argues that the testimony does not relate to Sempra's application at all, but instead constitutes

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an "invitation for the Commission to open an entirely new broad-based rulemaking to consider the choice *ab initio*." (Motion at 5.) Sempra believes that competing expert projections of market impacts and market conditions are no substitute for real life experience, that the Commission will be in a stronger position to evaluate market effects of retail choice once there are actually certificated ESPs doing business in Arizona, (Motion at 5-6), and that there is no reason for the Commission to undertake a rulemaking at this time in order to develop new criteria governing the granting of CC&Ns for ESPs, (Motion at 7).

## Sempra's Argument Regarding New West Witness Fox-Penner's Direct Testimony

Sempra asserts that the Fox-Penner testimony does not address Sempra's proposed rates or the fair value of Sempra's assets, but is instead generic, in the nature of an academic work summarizing Dr. Fox-Penner's prior publications. While not taking a position on the Fox-Penner testimony, Sempra argues that it should be stricken because the issues discussed therein are irrelevant to Sempra's application and outside the scope of this proceeding.

### Sempra's Argument Regarding RUCO Witness Ahearn's Direct Testimony

Sempra argues that the Ahearn testimony, like the testimony of the New West witnesses, raises issues that are unnecessary to the consideration of Sempra's application and are beyond the scope of the application. Sempra objects to the public policy perspective of the Ahearn testimony and argues that it is the public policy of the State of Arizona, as expressed by the Legislature, that "a competitive market shall exist in the sale of electric generation service." (Motion at 8, citing A.R.S. § 40-202(B).) Sempra contends that the Ahearn testimony "raises issues that are beyond the Commission's jurisdiction and authority to rescind as a matter of law and public policy." (Motion at 8.)

## AIR LIQUIDE'S RESPONSE TO THE MOTION

Air Liquide supports Sempra's Motion and agrees with Sempra's characterization of the issues to be decided in this proceeding. Air Liquide argues that "this proceeding should not be used by opponents to debate or relitigate the merits of retail electric competition." (Air Liquide Response at 6.) Air Liquide believes that "in order to reverse the state policy favoring the state of retail electric competition at this juncture," New West and RUCO "must affect both legislative and regulatory

change due to the overlapping jurisdiction of the state Legislature and Commission over electricity and competition." (Air Liquide Response at 2.) Air Liquide points out that Commission Decision No. 65154 (September 10, 2002) ("Track A Order") directed the Commission's Utilities Division Staff to form an Electric Competition Advisory Group ("ECAG") and that Decision No. 68485 (February 23, 2006) stated that the Arizona Independent Scheduling Administrator ("AISA") "currently provides the important public benefit of keeping the possibility of retail access available to Arizona at a minimal cost, by providing potential competitors with the necessary assurance that they will have fair and equitable access to transmission until an RTO is formed and approved by FERC to take over that function." (Air Liquide Response at 5, citing Decision No. 68485 at 15.) Air Liquide argues that New West's and RUCO's prefiled Direct Testimony represent "an unlawful collateral attack on Decision No. 68485." (Air Liquide Response at 5.)

#### **NEW WEST'S RESPONSE TO SEMPRA'S MOTION**

New West believes that the testimony that Sempra requests to have stricken demonstrates that granting Sempra a CC&N at this time is not in the public interest, and requests that Sempra's Motion be denied. (New West Response at 5-7.) New West asserts that the issues raised in the testimony in question must be considered due to the public interest determination necessary in a CC&N proceeding. (New West Response at 1-2, citing *Pacific Greyhound Lines v. Sun Valley Bus Lines, Inc.,* 70 Ariz. 65, 72, 216 P.2d 404, 409 (1950) (CC&Ns can only be acquired from the Commission upon affirmative showing that issuance would best serve the public interest).) New West contends that the testimony in question is relevant, as the Commission must consider the public interest implications of its decision in granting CC&Ns, (New West Response at 2-3, citing A.R.S. § 40-282(C) and *Arizona Corp. Comm'n v. Woods*, 171 Ariz. 286, 830 P.2d 807 (1992)), and that the public interest is the controlling consideration in a CC&N proceeding, (*Id.*, citing *James P. Paul Water Co. v. Arizona Corp. Comm'n*, 137 Ariz. 426, 429, 671 P.2d 404, 407 (1983); *Arizona Corp. Comm'n v. Tucson Ins. and Bonding Agency*, 3 Ariz. App. 458, 463, 415 P.2d 472, 477 (1966); *Davis v. Corp. Comm'n*, 96 Ariz. 215, 218, 393 P.2d 909, 911 (1964); and *Pueblo Del Sol Water Co. v. Arizona Corp. Comm'n*, 160 Ariz. 285, 286, 772 P.2d 1138, 1139 (App. 1988)(Commission should

examine all available evidence to determine whether CC&N is detrimental to the public interest)).

New West argues that consideration of the public interest is particularly appropriate in this case, asserting that "Sempra's application is a request that the Commission reinstitute retail electric competition in Arizona. . . . The structure for competition that was envisioned in Arizona and elsewhere during the 1990s has been proven to be a recipe for failure. Fortunately for Arizona, the Commission in the early 2000's reversed course and Arizona has operated quite successfully since." (New West Response at 3.) New West states that Sempra has filed the instant application prior to completion of the comprehensive review of all Electric Competition Rules that the Track A Order stated was necessary and before Commission review of rules and policies in the wake of *Phelps Dodge*. (New West Response at 3.) New West argues that this fact makes the policy areas addressed by the testimony in question relevant, material, and particularly appropriate to the Commission's public interest determination in this case. (New West Response at 3-4.)

New West disagrees with Sempra's assertion that A.R.S. §§ 40-207 and 40-208 have preempted the Commission's public interest determination regarding retail direct access. New West believes that the Commission is "not foreclosed by the provisions of Title 40 in considering the broad public interest implications of this Application." (New West Response at 5.) New West argues that the amendments to Title 40 were added well after the Commission first adopted its Retail Electric Competition Rules and that the purpose of the legislation was to confirm existing Commission authority and to fill any gaps in existing Commission authority. (New West Response at 4, citing A.R.S. § 40-202(B) and (C).) New West argues that it would be consistent with the legislation for the Commission to decide that the comprehensive review of all Electric Competition Rules, as contemplated by the Track A Order, should be completed prior to consideration of Sempra's application. (New West Response at 5.)

# RUCO'S RESPONSE TO SEMPRA'S MOTION

RUCO argues that Sempra's Motion is based on an erroneous assumption that the question of the public interest is beyond the scope of this case and requests that the testimony not be stricken. (RUCO Response at 4.) RUCO argues that Sempra's characterization of the "three core issues" to be 1 d d 2 C 3 t d d

decided in this proceeding overlooks the fact that the public interest is also a necessary element of the Commission's analysis in this proceeding. (RUCO Response at 2.) In addition, RUCO argues that the public interest issue was raised in testimony that Sempra has not moved to strike,<sup>4</sup> and that to deny RUCO the opportunity to respond to that testimony would infringe on RUCO's due process rights as a party to this proceeding. (RUCO Response at 2.)

In response to Sempra's argument that A.R.S. § 40-202 preempts the Commission from making a public interest determination to grant Sempra a CC&N, RUCO also argues that it is the Commission, not the Legislature, that has the authority to set utility rates and to establish the appropriate market structure for utilities. (RUCO Response at 4, citing Ariz. Constitution, Art. XV, Sec. 3; State of Arizona v. Tucson Gas, 15 Ariz. 294, 307, 138 P.781, 786 (1914); and Phelps Dodge, 207 Ariz. 95, 109, 83 P.3d 573, 587 (App. 2004)).

## RUCO'S REPLY TO AIR LIQUIDE'S RESPONSE TO SEMPRA'S MOTION

RUCO filed a Reply to Air Liquide's Response in order to address Air Liquide's argument that the testimony Sempra wishes to have stricken constitutes an unlawful collateral attack on Decision Nos. 65154 and 68485. RUCO argues that neither the Track A Order nor Decision No. 68485 evaluated the desirability of retail electric competition, and that Air Liquide provides no legal authority for its claim that it would be unlawful for the Commission to examine, in this proceeding, the desirability of retail electric competition. (RUCO Reply at 2.) RUCO asserts that, while parties to the Track A Order may have raised issues related to retail electric competition, the Track A Order did not address the substance of the matter, but instead deferred the issues for resolution at a later time. (RUCO Reply at 3.) Regarding Decision No. 68485, RUCO argues that the question in that proceeding was not whether retail electric competition was in the public interest, but whether Arizona utilities should be permitted to continue funding the AISA, and that the issue of the merits of retail electric competition was not raised in that proceeding. (RUCO Reply at 3.) RUCO argues that nothing about the Track A Order or Decision No. 68485 precludes the Commission from considering

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> RUCO refers to the prefiled Direct Testimony of Bing Young on behalf of Staff and the prefiled Direct Testimony of Kevin Higgins on behalf of Air Liquide. RUCO also expects that testimony to be filed on behalf of Staff in the near future will address public interest issues, based on the request for proposals ("RFP") that Staff issued seeking consulting services in relation to this proceeding. (RUCO Response at 3, referring to the RFP attached to RUCO's Response.)

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the question of whether retail electric competition is in the public interest, and the implications thereof on Sempra's application, and that those Decisions do not create a basis for striking testimony as requested in the Motion.

#### STAFF'S RESPONSE TO SEMPRA'S MOTION

Staff disagrees with Sempra's argument that the testimony in question expands the issues raised and does not address the core issues presented by this proceeding. (Staff Response at 1.) Staff states that while it may not necessarily agree with all of the positions taken in the testimony, Staff opposes the Motion based on Staff's belief that the testimony that Sempra requests to have stricken provides information that may be helpful to the Commission. Staff contends that Sempra's arguments go more to the weight to be given to the testimony than to its admissibility. Staff states that issues regarding retail electric competition continue to persist and that *Phelps Dodge* has set aside some of the Commission's electric competition rules. Staff believes that these facts make it difficult to conclude that the testimony in question is likely to be irrelevant to the Commission in its consideration of Sempra's application. (Staff Response at 1.)

## <u>ANALYSIS</u>

Sempra, in defining the "three core issues" that it wishes the Commission to address, concedes that the Commission must determine whether Sempra satisfies "the relevant statutory and regulatory criteria" that would warrant granting it a CC&N. The remainder of the Motion appears to gloss over the Commission's duty to consider a central facet of the "regulatory criteria" necessary to its determination on CC&N applications - the public interest. As RUCO noted, the public interest is a necessary element of the Commission's analysis in this proceeding, and as New West pointed out, Arizona courts have long recognized the Commission's duty to make a public interest determination in considering CC&N issues. Far from being "irrelevant," facts pertaining to the public interest in regard to the grant of a CC&N in this proceeding are very likely to be relevant, material, and appropriate. The parties may differ in their opinion of whether certain individual facts actually pertain to the public interest, but at this juncture of the proceeding, it is inappropriate to strike the entirety of a witness' prefiled testimony simply because its scope exceeds the narrow criteria that an

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applicant wishes the Commission to consider. As Sempra states in its argument, the Commission, in its consideration of Sempra's application under current authorities, is "fully capable of delineating its oversight role and both determining and applying the relevant constitutional, statutory and regulatory criteria to Sempra." (Motion at 7.) And as Staff states in its Response, issues regarding retail electric competition continue to persist, and *Phelps Dodge* has set aside some of the Commission's electric competition rules.

We disagree with the position taken by Air Liquide in its Response that New West's and RUCO's prefiled testimony constitute an unlawful collateral attack on Decision No. 68485. While Decision No. 68485 stated that the AISA provided the benefit of keeping the possibility of retail access available at a minimal cost, it also noted that the existence of the AISA had not been sufficient in itself to assure retail competition and that the AISA was operating in a downsized mode in recognition of the lack of retail competition. (Decision No. 68485 at 15.) As RUCO stated in its Reply, neither the Track A Order nor Decision No. 68485 provide a basis for striking testimony as requested in the Motion.

Precluding a party from presenting facts regarding the public interest implications of granting a CC&N to an applicant runs counter to the purpose of an administrative proceeding such as this one and could deprive the Commission of information helpful to its determination.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Motion to Strike filed by Sempra Energy Solutions LLC on December 3, 2007, is hereby denied.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that all parties must comply with Rules 31 and 38 of the Rules of the Arizona Supreme Court and A.R.S. § 40-243 with respect to practice of law and admission *pro hac vice*.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Ex Parte Rule (A.A.C. R14-3-113-Unauthorized Communications) continues to apply to this proceeding as the matter is now set for public hearing.

1 IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Presiding Officer may rescind, alter, amend, or waive any portion of this Procedural Order either by subsequent Procedural Order or by ruling at hearing. 2 3 Dated this 20th day of December, 2007. 4 5 6 ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE 7 8 Copies of the foregoing mailed/delivered this 2014 day of December, 2007 to: 10 **Gregg Bass** SEMPRA ENERGY SOLUTIONS 11 101 Ash Street, HQ09 San Diego, CA 92101-3017 12 Lawrence V. Robertson 13 P.O. Box 1448 Tubac, AZ 85646 14 Attorney for Sempra Energy Solutions LLC 15 Michael W. Patten J. Matthew Derstine 16 ROSHKA, DEWULF & PATTEN 400 East Van Buren Street, Suite 800 17 Phoenix, AZ 85004 Attorneys for Tucson Electric Power Company 18 Michelle Livengood 19 TUCSON ELECTRIC POWER COMPANY One South Church Street, Suite 200 20 Tucson, AZ 85702 21 Thomas L. Mumaw Deborah R. Scott 22 PINNACLE WEST CAPITAL CORPORATION 400 North 5th Street 23 P.O. Box 53999, MS 8695 Phoenix, AZ 85072-3999 24 Robert J. Metli 25 Kristoffer P. Kieffer SNELL & WILMER, LLP 26 One Arizona Center Phoenix, AZ 85004 27 Attorneys for Arizona Public Service Company

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